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CHILD WELFARE

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A NEW ROLE FOR THE SOCIAL WORKER IN THE NURSERY SCHOOL

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Council Child Development Center
New York, N. Y.

Arising out of the research, planning and team experience of the Nursery Consultation Unit of the Council Child Development Center, this paper presents a special consideration of the development of the old and the new approaches in one school. Mrs. Sands gives an exciting account of how several disciplines can enter into cooperative effort, and an equally exciting account of a new role for the social worker in a day care center.

THE social worker first appeared in the nursery school two decades ago, in the wake of the great mental hygiene movement which followed the first World War. This movement, sweeping like a tidal wave into every area of American life, particularly influenced the social agencies of the country. The atmosphere of the times was keyed to psychiatric understanding of behavior, to a new approach to people. Family and children's services were activated to participate in programs outside the usual agency limits, such as nursery schools.

The presence of the social worker in the school indicated a changed orientation for both casework agency and school. The social worker was introduced to families and children in a setting other than the agency; the teacher came into close contact with a discipline different from her own. In searching for ways of working together, each profession tended to adhere to its most clearly defined practices. Thus, the mysteries of "interviewing" and direct work with individuals were generally left to the social worker, while the staff of the nursery school confined itself to teaching and educational planning.

The social worker's activity was representative of her long-established role as a specialist who practiced casework in whatever setting she found herself. In the nursery school it led to her assumption of what heretofore had been school functions. She took over intake, carried a caseload and made referrals. Leading workers in the nursery school field conceived of the social worker as an integral part of the school, a staff member like the teachers and director, with a continuing permanent job.

Helps Staff to Use Themselves Differently

This paper will tell the story of a nursery school and its use of a social worker in another and new sense, as a consultant to the school. In this role her function was not to become an additional member of the staff; it was rather to help the staff members to a different use of themselves, and the school to a more effective functioning with its children and parents.

Fundamentally, it was a new application of mental hygiene principles and psychiatric thinking to the nursery school. It involved studying the school, its personnel, its program, and through planned meetings and discussions enabling the staff further to define and carry out their varied responsibilities. In many instances this meant new tasks and new procedures.

In many ways the new use of the social worker was a departure from the old, and the change was a radical one for this school. The social worker's methods, her approach, the areas of her concern, were part of the general orientation of the Nursery Consultation Unit of the Council Child Development Center in New York City. The Unit is composed of psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers, pediatricians and educators. Teams of members of these disciplines are assigned to each school which is affiliated with the Unit. The Unit works with a variety of nursery schools, both private schools and publicly supported day care centers. The team works with the entire personnel of the school. When a social worker or counselor is present, who undertakes the family study to determine economic and social needs, the team works to coordinate this study with the educational process. Always the aim is for each discipline to augment the other, with the goal of helping the teachers and the director in their primary function, understanding child and parent.

In this school the Unit team consisted of a social worker and a psychiatrist; the social worker, who spent approximately two days a week at the school, functioned in consultation with the psychiatrist of her team and with the Unit as a whole. It is the Unit's method of work and the actual experience of its application in this school that will be described here.

The school was a well-established one with deep roots in the community, with a history of progress as it moved and shifted to accommodate itself to the patterns of changing times and changing educational thinking. Three years before it became affiliated with the Unit, it had drastically altered its educational

program. It had become more fluid and flexible, had placed more emphasis on free play and individual expression, and the process of change was continuing. Its staff reflected the vicissitudes of these years. Some were still in the process of shaking off the dust of the old approach and the old program even as they struggled to meet the demands of the new. Others, educated only in the new approach, were eager to learn and test out new concepts.

For the last two years, just prior to the coming of the Nursery Consultation Unit consultant, the school had the experience of a casework and psychiatric program. A full-time social worker shared in the total program, had handled the intake, counseled with the director and teachers about individual children, held parent consultations and made referrals to other agencies. There were weekly staff meetings with a psychiatrist in which individual children and the nursery school program were discussed. Because of its extensive, and intensive, program this was a good school in which to examine both the results of such a program and the effects of a radical departure from such a use of a social worker.

School Had Many Problems

What was the school like at the end of two years of this program? It was a school with many problems. The more advanced members of the staff had gained in understanding of child development and behavior, but others had not absorbed the material so that it had become part of their motivation and responses. This was clearly seen in the fluctuation of enrollment at the beginning of the school year. Some teachers were generally able to handle the problem of a child separating from his mother and adjusting to school. But with others, children continually enrolled and dropped out, taking with them unresolved feelings of disappointment, anxiety and failure. There was wide divergence in the staff's understanding of parents' needs and children's needs. In some groups there was the beginning of adequate parent-teacher conferences. But in others, there were no parent conferences and less rapport with parents altogether.

There had been much dependence on the social worker's "taking over" in the areas of behavior and personality. As the social worker "took over", the teachers "held back" and were not able to use themselves in these areas with the spontaneity and expertness of which they were capable. Thus, one teacher labeled an inhibited, childlike mother "inaccessible" because she could not easily enter into a relationship with the teacher. Another could not understand how a new child who had a fear of doctors, could associate a routine physical checkup with the school and be unable to return.

In addition, there was actual weakening of the structure of the school. For as the social worker's activities had become more diffuse, spreading throughout the school, the teachers' and director's activities had become more limited, particularly in connection with parents. An artificial demarcation developed both in practice and in thinking between their role and the social worker's role. When a problem presented itself in the group, whether in relation to parent or child, they tended to carry it to the case-worker because they did not think they were capable of acting on their own.

When the full-time social worker left, teachers and director were fearful of assuming functions which had been delegated to the social worker; they could not see themselves operating without her. Because of this the Council agreed to have the new social worker continue with intake, contrary to usual Council procedure. It is essential to note here (and this is fundamental to the approach of the Nursery Consultation Unit) that the structural weakness referred to above occurred not because of lack of ability on the part of social worker or staff—many of them were of high caliber professionally—but because of the way in which the social worker had been used.

Intake Studied First

The new consultant appeared at the beginning of the school year, when the problems arising from the great fluctuation in enrollment were most evident. She therefore applied herself first to a study of the intake. The study revealed that most children and parents who dropped out did so because of problems of separation from each other and of adjustment to the new situation. The previous social worker had worked alone in the area of intake and adjustment. It was she, rather than the teacher, who assumed responsibility for helping parent and child through the separation period. But what was vital to making the adjustment was lost in this arrangement; no one could take over for the teacher and make the relationship with the child. It seemed clear that in the day-to-day, hour-by-hour living through of the experience of separation, it was the teacher who was destined to play the most meaningful role. It was she, by her very position in the group, who could help parent and child to take the great step and move forward.

The consultant's first job was thus one of attuning, of heightening the teacher's insight into her own role. The teachers were helped to take increasing responsibility for easing parents as well as children through the adjustment period. The director and teachers increased in understanding how individual needs could be met in the nursery room, as well as in the social worker's office. They began to see intake and

separation as a school function, not a separate social work function. They began to realize that the integration of the admission procedure with the child's actual entrance into the group was a function that could be initiated at intake by a school staff member, such as the director, and carried through with children and parents by the teacher.

The consultant was able to help the staff to evaluate the particular character of the school's intake, to focus on the kind of material they really needed to best prepare both school and family for the child's admission. The emphasis was shifted from a too detailed history of birth, illnesses and training to more consideration of the child's present behavior and relationships and his preparation for the school.

Teacher Held Key to Success of Program

Conferences between consultant and staff were always geared to enabling the teachers to understand parents and children as individuals, to see the underlying forces operating in the separation from each other. The thread that ran through this was plainly drawn. Of all the staff it was the teacher who represented the new force entering into the life of each parent and child, and it was the teacher who had the opportunity to make the relationship which could be the bridge to a successful school experience. Life itself, the actual experiences in the school, confirmed this new approach.

Mrs. M., divorced from her husband, thin, careworn, came to the school one day with her only child, Mamie, aged 4. They had never been separated. Mamie and her mother shared a single room, a single bed. Underneath her winter snow suit, Mamie wore only underwear, not a dress, because she never went to another child's home, never visited, never played with others. Mamie was fed and dressed by her mother, was hovered over, protected and over-protected. Mrs. M. was fearful of the new experience, but she was pressed to it by financial needs and ill health; perhaps with Mamie in school she could have much-needed rest, perhaps later find a job.

Mamie was able to move slowly into the group. It took her a long time before she could socialize and play with the others, but she was reaching out and was ready to come. It was the mother who was lost in the overwhelming shock of her new aloneness. After Mamie was ready to stay alone in the group, Mrs. M. hung on, clinging in some tenuous way to the child. After a while she began to say that Mamie wasn't really playing with the children, maybe Mamie was too young for this, maybe she would take her out of school "for now".

This was a critical period, a point at which many children and mothers are lost to schools. But here the teachers were helped to see that as Mamie needed to find a "mother" in the group, so did Mrs. M. need to have the steady support of a strong "parent" who could help her, too, in her struggle to learn to live more independently. The teachers were patient with her. She had to stay some days long after other mothers had brought their children and gone, and the teachers accepted her need. They were interested in her; she felt their warmth and she responded. With assurance that her child was comfortable and that she, too, was welcome and

important, she was able slowly to break away. When later in the year she had to have a minor operation, she arranged it over a weekend so that Mamie wouldn't miss school. And the teacher who had had the most difficulty in really getting to know her parents, was the one who was able to make the closest relationship with Mrs. M.

With the new focus on individual personalities and needs, the teachers began to think more and more in terms of the meaning of separation to the parent as well as to the child. And as they began to individualize more, they began to see more clearly what it was that *they* represented to each child and parent. They learned that they could not feel satisfied when a child accepted the school, that the mother's needs were just as pressing. A child could be lost when a mother consciously or unconsciously was not able to follow through, especially in this early period. There was a touching episode in the school one day which brought home a mother's needs very graphically to the staff; when a child rushed eagerly into the nursery room in his first week of school, his mother said in answer to a question about him, "*He's* all right, but what about me?"

The consultant's work with the staff in the area of separation and adjustment soon bore fruit. The teachers actually began to take over and to use themselves differently. Almost immediately fluctuation of admissions ceased dramatically. Out of twelve admissions in two months, only one child dropped out, and this occurred because of problems the mother brought with her to intake, not because a teacher failed in her job.

Teachers Developed More Confidence

But this success and this new role with parents for the teachers had even deeper and wider implications. The teachers began to feel a growing confidence in their ability to work with parents and children. They acquired a reawakened belief in their capacity to understand the "mysteries" of personality, which formerly had been reserved for the psychiatrist and the social worker. As the character of the changes resulting from the new orientation became more distinct, there was constant interpretation of the role of the Nursery Consultation Unit social worker as a consultant only. It was her job to help the school staff achieve greater integration and more developed skills, not to take on permanent responsibilities herself. In addition, there was an understanding between consultant and staff that in certain situations of unusual difficulty the social worker was available to work directly with child or parent for a limited period and with defined goals.

The school was looked on as an entity, like an individual, like a group; a dynamic thing, a combination

of forces, of relationships, of strengths, of weaknesses. The concept was of the consultant as a new factor introduced into the school to help it realize all its strengths and develop to a greater capacity, and then, just as in individual treatment, which should not be continuous and never-ending, to leave the school sufficiently integrated to be able to function by itself. The consultant achieved this principally through help to the staff in understanding basic personality needs, education in the new concept of teachers and director as the bearers of the school's responsibilities, and interpretation of how these aims could be realized within the special framework of the school setting. The tool which implemented these goals was the use of direct observations in the nursery rooms, in the outdoor play areas, in the parent-teacher meetings. The raw material of the life of the school was channeled into tangible media for discussion and conference. The teachers were encouraged to utilize their own observations as a basis for understanding their groups and their own activity within the groups. Their work with parents and children was something that grew for them out of their own experiences and the special meaning these experiences had for them. Again, actual case material confirmed both the goals and the means to achieve them.

Tommy S., aged 5, was enrolled in the nursery shortly after the school year began. He had been in the school the previous year, had remained only three weeks and had then dropped out. The school had accepted an explanation sent through a neighbor. His mother, when she came to school this year, said Tommy had not been able to take the separation from her, that he had been reluctant to leave her and finally just couldn't continue. She thought he was readier now. The previous summer, when she was ill, he had stayed with an aunt for several weeks and had seemed quite contented. Tommy knew about the new school application and the mother said that he wanted to come. In the intake discussion, Mrs. S. brought out some concern about Tommy's behavior at home, particularly his close attachment to her. He would not sleep in a room in the back of their house which was some distance from her room; he had to be in a room next to hers. Every night he awakened from sleep to make sure she was there, and to climb into her bed. He wet his bed and felt humiliated over this.

When he entered the school the second time, Tommy was a rather pallid-looking boy, quiet, almost listless. The early weeks following his admission were fraught with anxiety. The first day he came he wet his bed during the rest period and never again would he stay for rest. He would come to school and tell his mother that he wanted to stay, then decide to leave when she did. Or he would be reluctant to come at all, the mother would encourage and support him and he would appear late in the morning, evidences of his struggle on his tired little face. Or he would allow his mother to leave and two hours later he would want so desperately to go home that the mother would have to be sent for.

A climax came when Miss Rose, the head teacher, returned to school after several days' absence. She recalled later that in the rush of returning and absorbing what had happened during her absence, she had given Tommy no special attention at all. Tommy's tentative hold on the school was broken; the next day he did not appear at all, and after several days elapsed without his com-

ing, the teachers recognized that the pattern of the previous year was being repeated.

The teachers and the director, with the help of the consultant, examined Tommy's behavior in the nursery group, studied what they knew of his behavior at home, and evaluated this in the light of his failure to make the grade the year before. They began to see that this was a child who would never be able to separate himself from his mother until he found a "mother" in the school, and that to make such a relationship he needed to have a great deal of attention and warmth and understanding from one teacher who would become "his person". They then saw how he must have awaited Miss Rose's return and how disappointed he must have been at the superficial contact he had with her when she was in the group again.

The teachers came to recognize that if this child were to fail again in the new experience, it could be a deeply damaging thing with effects that he could carry with him throughout his life. They knew also that Tommy would soon be entering the public school and that if he carried with him into that experience the memory of his two failures here, it would be much more difficult for him to separate again from his mother and relate himself to others.

The teachers reached out to make the relationship with Tommy. They made a home visit and thus in one brief episode they showed him that they really cared and that they wanted him. It was a wonderful, joyous visit and the next morning, when Miss Rose entered the building, she found Tommy on a bench in the hall. He had been there since a quarter to nine waiting and eager for the day to begin.

And a "new day" did begin for Tommy from that time on. The two teachers had decided that one of them would devote herself to Tommy. Tommy was quickly aware of this and he attached himself to her. He would not rest on a cot with the other children; he went with Miss Rose wherever she went in the school. If she was at a meeting, he played with toys in a room next door. If she went on an errand to the kitchen, he came along. Miss Rose accepted this. In two weeks, Tommy was able to remain in the nursery room during rest, not to lie on a cot, but to sit in an adjoining room with a book, with Miss Rose looking in on him now and then.

In the group he was at first a straggler, then very gradually he made contact with one of the little girls who was one of the weakest members of the group. This new relationship solidified and he reached out to others. There was a period for about one week when he was very aggressive, shouting and hitting and daring the others; this, too, the teachers understood and accepted as yet another sign of Tommy's progress and as little limit as possible was put on this activity.

In about six weeks, Tommy was able to rest on a cot in the nursery room and he did not wet again. He became a stronger and stronger member of the group, really involved in the give and take of relationships and group experiences. At home, he stopped his night wetting, ceased to waken at night and go into his mother's bed, and was able to sleep in a room with his brother, a room some distance away from the mother's.

In addition to studying individual children, the teachers developed by exploring established practices and routines.

After a period during which both teachers had left the group frequently during rest time to attend staff meetings and the cook's helper had remained in the room, the children became restive and noisy. At first the teachers were perplexed; they said the children knew the substitute and liked her. As they thought about the needs of the children, they saw the rest and sleep period as a time when basic needs come to the fore, when the need for mother may be most strong, when their own presence is the child's security and

protection. After the teachers had then revised their schedules so that one was always present in the room, rest again became a peaceful period. In exploring what had happened the teachers gained new understanding of the meaning they have and the role they play for the children.

There was pull on the consultant by some of the staff to enter into casework relationships with parents, particularly those who presented the most difficult behavior. It took time and a great deal of interpretation to point out that work with parents was clearly defined by the school setting. Within the framework of the school, teachers and director could give educational guidance and in more serious situations, where parents requested it, they could refer to family or psychiatric agencies. Once freed from the fear that they were not competent to counsel with parents or that, at the other extreme, they would go "too far", once they understood that the safeguard in work with parents was in keeping to their knowledge of each child and to the questions the parents themselves brought, they could comfortably carry on parent-teacher conferences. Thus the teachers came to understand that in their conferences with Mrs. Weiss, a hostile mother who never asked for further help, it would be too threatening for her if they were to take the initiative in suggesting a referral to a family agency. To discuss such a referral with Mrs. Patrick, however, who clearly asked for help and said she could not manage the children at home, would be a most important and acceptable part of their work.

New Orientation Toward Guidance

In this school, the caliber of work was heightened as the responsibility of each staff member became more clearly defined. This was particularly true of parent-teacher conferences. The staff realized increasingly how closely the goals in work with parents were tied to the structure in which they operated. A school was not a treatment center, but a place that could offer to parents the kind of guidance about handling their children that well qualified teachers and director are so well able to give. This was a new orientation, because work with parents had heretofore been divided into what teachers could do and what the social worker would have to assume. It is an orientation with tremendous implications. It opens up possibilities of educational guidance for tens of thousands of families who can utilize help but who stand outside the usual limits of agencies and clinics.

There are further implications in the total program described. A consultant, as she operates at the Nursery Consultation Unit, can serve more than one school. In addition, as aims are accomplished, the consultant can leave old schools and take on new

ones. Thus a greater number of parents and children can be served than could ever have been envisaged under traditional methods of work.

It is apparent that the consultant, working as part of the Unit team, has been conceived of here as a specialist in motivations of human behavior. Consultants should have, not only the usual social work education, but also training and experience in applied dynamic psychology and child development. They must be flexible, adaptable persons able to work in the community with individuals of varied social and emotional development. They must have respect for disciplines other than their own.

Of the specialists working at present in the field of human relations, the psychiatric social worker appears to be most available for the role of nursery school consultant. She has had sociological training in addition to basic psychiatric training. She is a person educated to be aware of the culture, the setting, the community in which she functions. In addition to this knowledge and background, she must have the opportunity to develop the basic skills which will enable her to work in a nursery school setting. This is the opportunity that is provided by the teamwork method of the Nursery Consultation Unit,—the opportunity to learn to understand the behavior of individual children, the relationships of teachers and children, and the particular nature of each school in which she will operate.

Just as, in individual treatment, the social worker must understand internal struggles, cultural patterns and social forces in their impact on the individual, so in the school she must grasp intramural relationships and environmental factors. Again as, in individual treatment, only those individuals can be helped who want and are accessible to change, so it is with a school and its selection. In the school described here, there was a history of change and a willingness to consider departure from old methods of work.

But if personnel of schools change, if the consultant comes and goes, what is the lasting result of the new program? The answer to this is that each school has its own way of life, its own perspectives, its own procedures, made up of an accumulation of experiences from the past and the school's special history. Ways of work, approaches to children, routines, even the selection of play materials, permeate a school and after a time become part of a definite structure. Thus one school is known in the community as "progressive" and another as "old-fashioned". One grows and expands, another goes on in the same way and becomes a little tired and shabby. And thus some, with the utilization of new programs, will hopefully achieve goals of more developed skills, more effective functioning and closer bonds to the people they serve.

THE PROCESS OF SUPERVISION IN ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS*

A Report of the Inter-Agency Discussion
Group of New York City

This report, which summarizes some interesting discussion of an important phase of our adoption services, also shows a constructive use of various points of view within the group.

IN the fall of 1950, representatives of a group of adoption agencies in New York City began a series of meetings to bring about a closer relationship based on a greater degree of mutual understanding of each agency's program. It was also hoped that such meetings would stimulate an interchange of thinking on various phases of adoption practice. The group consisted of three representatives from each of the following agencies:

Catholic Home Bureau Adoption Department
Free Synagogue Child Adoption Committee
New York Foundling Hospital
Sheltering Arms Childrens Service
Spence-Chapin Adoption Service
State Charities Aid Association.

This year attention was directed to various aspects of supervision of children in adoptive homes.

Over the period of five meetings, we sought to clarify and develop our concepts related to purpose, method and content in supervision. We wished to see as clearly as we could what we were about in this phase of adoption, hoping then to see our way towards more effective functioning in it.

As we sat down together, our common concern with adoption started us off as a group unified on the whole in our aim, our interest, and our feeling of responsibility. As we went along we recognized that in our various agencies we function differently in some respects, and that this might be due in part to slight variations in philosophy, as well as to differences in structure and ages of children placed. However, we were not as concerned with our differences as we were with understanding the problems of supervision common to us all.

We began by trying to define the purpose of supervision, which we thought of as covering the period between the actual placement of the child and the completion of legal adoption. We found immediately that it was not so simple to decide about the purpose of supervision, and we returned to the topic repeatedly before we settled it to our satisfaction.

In the course of this discussion we challenged ourselves: Is there a purpose? Does not the home study

satisfy us as to the capacity of the couple for parenthood? And while there may be problems in the early adjustment of the family are they very different from the problems of natural families in the community? Furthermore, is not our goal to create an independent, autonomous family—to have the parents make the child their own from the day of placement?

This last point brought us to a puzzling dilemma: Is there not a conflict in aims in our telling a family at the time of placement that this is now to be their child, while at the same time we retain custody, make ourselves felt through supervision, and may even have to assume an authoritative role if the situation demands it? We thought the conflict was made most apparent in the agreement forms we require a family to sign at the time of taking the child, which in most instances are fairly specific as to the authority of the agency. It was generally felt that the agreement form formalizes the agency's legal and protective role, that most families are quite aware that the agency carries this responsibility, and some believed that for certain parents it can even be a source of security. We did agree on the importance of early and adequate interpretation to the family of our role during supervision in order to lessen the anxiety which might otherwise be stirred at the time of placement by the clear statement of the agency's power to break as well as make their family. We were left with a conclusion, however, that there *is* a conflict in philosophy in our simultaneously giving a child to a family and retaining concern and legal custody through the period of supervision. Along with this we recognized that our aim is to see the family established and to help them so they will be able to operate without us.

When we returned to our original query, "Is there a purpose for supervision, and what is it?"—we had no doubt about there being a purpose, and we saw it as two-fold, or, some thought, three-fold.

Our first and primary purpose was seen as that of a protective role towards the child. It was unanimously agreed that we have a responsibility to the child to be on hand to observe the outcome of the placement in terms of his progress and development and parental acceptance before giving consent to legal adoption. In this it was tacitly accepted that even with our best efforts to satisfy ourselves in advance of placement

* Copies of this report are available from the League office at 10 cents each to cover the cost of mailing.

as to the capacity of the adopting couple for parenthood we can not always foresee people as functioning parents.

In establishing that a protective role is an essential purpose in supervision we acknowledged that this carries with it an authoritative function to the point of our removing a child from the adoptive home if the problem is sufficiently serious and the family can not respond to help. Later we gave careful consideration to this kind of situation and concluded that perhaps it is only when gross problems exist that our role is one of offering intensive casework help to the family. If the family is inaccessible to casework help then we would need to assume an authoritative role and consider removal of the child. Thereupon we set ourselves to determine what we would consider as gross problems.

First, with respect to problems seen in the adoptive parents: We felt that the sort of overt cruelty and neglect for which natural parents sometimes have their children removed occurs so seldom with adoptive parents as to be negligible, but that a serious rejection of the child, which may be just as bad for him as the more dramatic misuse, may show itself through a combination of more subtle evidences, such as a pervasive coldness on the part of the parent towards the child, an absence of any signs of relatedness between them, a uniformly critical or complaining attitude and inability to find any enjoyment with the child. We considered that any excessive or obviously misplaced anxiety on the part of the parents about the child, his development or physical problems and so forth, should be a signal of difficulty which should have immediate attention lest it develop into a gross problem. Mental breakdown, death, serious incapacitating illness or separation of the parents were seen as the gross problems most likely to require removal of the child, although with recognition of the traumatic effect on the child of removal it was felt that each such situation should be carefully weighed to determine if in spite of the problem there might not be more advantage to the child in remaining. We did not consider too early training or rather restrictive handling of the child by the parents as gross problems provided that the prevailing attitudes were positive and the child happy and well-adjusted. We felt that strong resistance on the part of the parents to telling a child of his adoption was a serious problem but not one for which the solution would ever be removal of the child, nor did we feel that pregnancy of the adoptive mother would be a reason for withdrawing the child.

In thinking about gross problems which might be seen in the child, we immediately felt that as long as the family is genuinely accepting of the child with

his problem, however serious it may be, short of requiring institutional care, the question would not be one of removing the child but of helping the family to help the child; providing also that the child could benefit by family life. This we felt would be true whether the problem were physical, mental or emotional. Actually, in reviewing the experience of the various agencies, it appeared that relatively few children have been removed, and when it has been necessary, the causes have been of serious nature.

We considered also what sort of reception we should give to a request for a second child by adoptive parents who are having problems with their first, and we agreed pretty generally that upon the family's first raising the question, we would try to help them understand that it would not be helpful to place another child unless these problems could first be worked out.

A second and very essential purpose of supervision was seen in our responsibility to give help related specifically to the adoption situation. We recognized that despite the adequacy of the adopting parents, they and the child are entering an experience different in many respects from that of a family into which a child has been born. Most children come to the new situation having had and suffered the loss of at least two mothers; if he is beyond infancy, it is likely that there has been much more in his life so far to deprive and confuse him, such as hospitalizations or institutional care, or a series of boarding home placements. The child needs a spokesman, someone who will be able to connect his past with his present and interpret to the adoptive family, and possibly the community, behavior which may be distressing to them, or signs of the child's exaggerated need arising from past deprivation.

Adoptive parents, too, come to parenthood of a very different nature and in a very different way than natural parents. They have suffered real deprivation in not being able to produce a child of their own and face the continuing task of accepting the frustration of their sterility and overcoming the conflicts surrounding it. These conflicts may be stirred up again by the various problems to be met in adoption. The couple is suddenly precipitated into parenthood of a particular child without the benefit of building their relationship and their parental "know-how" from the time of the child's conception and birth as most parents do. They need help from the agency, in the person of their worker, in overcoming the effect of this gap. Now they must handle the attitudes of friends, neighbors, and relatives towards the child and the fact of his adoption. Most specifically, of course, they face the eventual task of explaining to

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Sophie van S. Theis Has Retired

SOPHIE VAN S. THEIS has retired from the position of Executive Secretary of the Child Placing and Adoption Committee of the State Charities Aid Association in New York, a position she held for 36 years.

Heartfelt good wishes from all of us in the Child Welfare League go to Miss Theis as we happily foresee that her exceptional qualities as a leader in child welfare will continue to influence the forward development of our services to children. Miss Theis was a member of the League's Board of Directors for six years, from 1933 to 1939, and is currently a member of our Policy Committee on Publications, so we are intimately aware of the many values in that influence.

Through the years some of us have worked with Miss Theis in her own agency as she ventured into hitherto untried areas with new ideas which resulted in a series of achievements with far-reaching influence, achievements brilliantly conceived and brilliantly executed. Sharing these with her could only lead to recognition of her amazing courage, deep well-springs of faith in people, and a limitless energy in defending the rights of children. These were a considerable source of encouragement not only to her colleagues but to interested and admiring laymen—I am proud to be included as one.

But Miss Theis also had the rare capacity of knowing how to represent the cause of children to the general public. She well knew how to tell about the somber side of child welfare, but she also dwelt on the sunny side.

It is hard to appraise the scope and power of her contribution to the nationwide effort to provide answers that will constructively meet the popular curiosity about adoption. For this and her many other accomplishments, we are grateful to Miss Theis. We look forward to the further benefits of her wisdom and enthusiasm.

MARSHALL FIELD
President

National Social Welfare Assembly Conference on Individual Services

As a result of the recent reorganization, the Social Casework Council of the National Social Welfare Assembly has become the Conference on Individual Services. J. Sheldon Turner, Chief, Division of Plans and Standards, Bureau of Public Assistance, is Chairman of the Conference; Spencer H. Crookes, the League's Executive Director, is Vice Chairman. Other League representatives to the Conference are Robert M. Mulford, General Secretary, Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; and Dr. Herbert M. Diamond, Board Member, Children's Aid Society, Northampton County, Pa.

Residential Treatment Study Extended

The League wishes to announce a two-year extension of the Field Foundation grant for the study of residential treatment of emotionally disturbed children. This will enable the League to continue to provide consultation on residential treatment and make available supplementary information about the 12 residential treatment centers intensively dealt with in the first study. The report of the first study is to be published shortly.

The basic study focus for the next two years will be on the types of care currently provided for emotionally disturbed children by agencies other than hospitals and psychiatric residential treatment centers offering intensive therapy. Other aspects of the study will include an evaluation of trends in the institutional care of children, of types of children coming into care, and of the changes necessary in existing institutions and agencies to enable them to care more adequately for the emotionally disturbed child.

Miss Helen R. Hagan, member of the League staff, will be in charge of this study. Joseph H. Reid, Assistant Executive Director of the League, will serve as consultant.

The League plans to bring together at future regional conferences institutional personnel to discuss and examine trends in institutional care. League members will be informed of further developments in the coming months.

Sandburg Broadcasts

The series of nationwide broadcasts in behalf of child welfare, featuring Carl Sandburg, distinguished American poet, to be sponsored by the Child Welfare League of America through the participation of member agencies, has unavoidably been postponed until January. The half-hour programs will be broadcast over the NBC radio network. Dates, hours, and further details about the series will be announced in the December issue of *CHILD WELFARE*.

New League Publication

A "Guide for the Health Program in the Day Care Center", issued by the Department of Health, New York City, has been reprinted with permission by the Child Welfare League of America. It is 24 pages long, costs \$.25 a copy, and may be obtained from the League office. A discount of 10 per cent will be given for orders of 10 or more copies.

MARY E. BORETZ AWARD FOR 1953

THREE months still remain for the submission of manuscripts for the third annual Mary E. Boretz Award, the deadline being February 1, 1953. Those planning to submit entries are urged by the Award Committee to send them in as early as possible.

Two grants of \$250 and \$150 respectively are to be awarded annually for manuscripts which make the most significant contribution to the field of child welfare. Students, board members, and professional workers are invited to participate. Manuscripts may be from 4000 to 6000 words and should be presented in five copies.

Manuscripts and inquiries should be addressed to the Information and Publications Department, Child Welfare League of America, 24 West 40th Street, New York 18, N. Y.

Baltimore Board Rate Study

The Baltimore Council of Social Agencies has issued a 16-page mimeographed report, "A Study of Current Boarding Rates", which will be of interest to other agencies with foster home care programs. The report was produced by Duane L. Peterson, Chairman, Committee on Public Payments to Voluntary Institutions and Agencies; Verna Waskowitz, Chairman, Subcommittee on Boarding Rates; and Gordon Manser, Secretary, Division of Family and Child Care Agencies.

New League Provisionals

Methodist Children's Home
Selma, Alabama
Max E. Livingston, Superintendent

Division of Child Welfare
State Department of Social Welfare
616 K Street
Sacramento, California
Miss Lucille Kennedy, Chief

Nachusa Lutheran Home for Children
Nachusa, Illinois
Rev. LeRoy F. Weihe, Superintendent

Division of Welfare
State Department of Public Health and Welfare
Jefferson City, Missouri
Proctor N. Carter, Director

CONFERENCES—1953

Eastern Regional Conference

February 4, 5, 6
Asbury Park, New Jersey
Chairman: Miss Frieda M. Kuhlmann, *Case Consultant*
The Spence-Chapin Adoption Service
New York City

Central Regional Conference

March 16, 17, 18
Columbus, Ohio
Chairman: Robert B. Canary, *Chief*
State Department of Public Welfare
Division of Social Administration
Columbus, Ohio

Southern Regional Conference

April 16, 17, 18
Nashville, Tennessee
Chairman: Miss Edna Hughes, *Director*
Child Welfare Division
State Department of Public Welfare
Nashville, Tennessee

South Pacific Regional Conference

April 26, 27, 28
Berkeley, California
Chairman: Clayton E. Nordstrom, *Executive Director*
Children's Foster Care Services
Oakland, California

North Pacific Regional Conference

April 30, May 1, 2
Seattle, Washington
Chairman: Mrs. John L. Milligan, *Board Member*
Seattle Children's Home
Seattle, Washington

New England Regional Conference

May 18, 19
Swampscott, Massachusetts
Chairman: Lawrence C. Cole, *Administrator*
State Department of Social Welfare
Child Welfare Services
Providence, Rhode Island

Southwest Regional Conference

June 10, 11, 12
Denver, Colorado
Chairman: Rothe Hilger, *Executive Director*
Colorado Children's Aid Society
Denver, Colorado

National Conference of Social Work

May 31-June 5
Cleveland, Ohio
League Headquarters: Hollenden Hotel

League Program Committee Chairman:

Miss Katharine J. Dunn, *Case Consultant*
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati
Children's Division
Dayton, Ohio

Subcommittee Chairmen:

West Coast: Miss Alice White
San Diego, California
Midwest: Leon H. Richman
Cleveland, Ohio
East Coast: James Dumpson
New York City

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the child himself his adoptive status, with all that this involves in their own feelings towards their sterility, the natural parents, possible illegitimacy, and the giving of sex information. They need the agency's support and help in facing their feelings and preparing for the task ahead.

In relation to the adoption situation in general, it is therefore a part of the purpose of supervision that the agency shall stand by, giving the help and support needed to enable the family and child to grow into a united family.

There was discussion and considerable difference of opinion about a possible third purpose, namely to use supervision to encourage the family's general growth and development as parents with the idea of furthering the best possible life experience for the family and child. Some thought it might be desirable to do all this, but unrealistic to think we could, while others indicated there might be question about how much the agency should take over when the family is trying to make the child their own, and need to grow and gain confidence through resolving some of the problems themselves, as natural parents would. In addition some felt that most couples are wanting a child from the agency, not help in being better parents, and that therefore they are not able to use help of this kind.

From consideration of purpose, we came rather naturally to method in supervision. When we were thinking about the agreement forms, we began asking ourselves how we interpret to the families the supervision period of a year which is commencing. We readily agreed that there should be preparatory interpretation at a stage previous to placement, and that the groundwork for supervision should start during the home study period. But then we became quite absorbed in examining "the year of supervision" and what we expect to put into it in terms of our contacts with the family. Recognizing that the New York State law requires the child to reside with the family for six months before adoption and the State Department of Social Welfare specifies a minimum of two visits by the agency, we were interested to note the practices of each of the agencies represented in this respect. We found that the general practice was a year of supervision for each of the agencies, although in one agency there was a good deal of flexibility so that the supervision period might be longer or shorter than a year, even as short as six months, depending on the age of the child when placed and the adjustment being made by the family group. For most agencies a minimum of four contacts with the family was required during the period, these being a combination of home visits and interviews held in the office.

In most of the agencies there were more home visits than office interviews, with recognition that on some occasions the privacy and more formalized setting of the office were needed in working with specific problems. All agencies required that the father be seen at least once, and one agency, that he be seen twice.

Aware of pressure on agencies to use their workers' time to the utmost advantage, particularly in establishing more children in permanent homes, and aware also of the eagerness of most families to complete legal adoption at the earliest that we will grant it, we began considering the pros and cons of a supervisory period of six months rather than a year. We acknowledged that not every situation requires the same amount of attention, and that there are different levels or intensities of supervision. We found ourselves in agreement that instead of the number of interviews being uniform, it should be influenced by the need of the family and the kind of situation. Then as we thought further of supervisory contacts as the chief vehicle for the relationship between the adopting parents and the agency, the *continuity* aspect of this relationship stood out for us with increasing sharpness. We thought that a lot that was important could slip away from us between contacts in the loose structure of four interviews a year, but that four interviews in half that time would keep us much closer to the stream of daily experience of the family and child, giving us an advantage of increased perception and effectiveness. In addition it was pointed out that if we are to consider having a meaningful casework contact with the family, and if there is to be any attempt to treat problems, then the lack of continuity in infrequent, widely spaced interviews makes the necessary handling of the family's resistance highly difficult. Also, some anxiety would inevitably be aroused with all its obvious dangers.

On the whole we were inclined to think the degree of continuity more important than the number of interviews, and we concluded that the possibility of limiting the usual supervisory period to a well-used six months was worth consideration. We recognized that if the period of supervision is to be geared to the needs of the individual case, some situations would need supervision even beyond our present practice of a year, and the opinion was expressed that when this happens, the agency should share with the family the reason for a longer supervision, while helping them to see what use they could make of the agency.

We did not feel we could say what should be a standard length for each supervisory interview but it was felt that the amount of time spent was not so important as that the contacts should be purposeful.

With respect to method in supervision, it was generally concluded that the kind and amount of assist-

ance given to adopting parents will be governed by their own needs and their relationship with the agency; that if confidence is established and effective contacts made, a good deal can be accomplished, but at the same time it was agreed that we should be cautious about expecting people to change or want to change very much. It also became apparent in our discussion of what we are doing in supervision that our tendency is to use educational rather than case-work methods.

As we were still turning over in our minds the idea of a shorter period for supervision, favorably on the whole, yet wondering a little whether this would really cover all that the family and child needed, we learned of some group meetings held with adoptive parents, of some years' standing, under the auspices of one of the agencies. These parents had had their children long enough to have been "on their own" for some time. It was interesting to us to learn that long after adoption these parents had problems in answering their children's questions, and that although they had taken with apparent ease the initial steps of telling their children about their status, most of them experienced some concern when moving into the area of sex instruction when it became necessary to bring out the distinction between giving birth to a baby and adopting one. From the manner in which these parents told of their experiences, it was apparent that they were finding increased confidence and comfort in the whole matter as the mutuality of their problems revealed itself. The response of the parents in these group meetings suggested to us that here might be a resource of particular value in supplementing what we have ordinarily done in supervision with families. It occurred to us for instance that if we were reducing the usual supervision period to six months, it might be useful to do something with group meetings later on, when discussion of problems that appear later would be more meaningful for the parents.

We were greatly interested in the potentialities of group meetings, and spent most of our fourth meeting in thinking about what uses they might have, the relationship between the intended use and the timing of the meetings, what would be the basis of selection of the parents to attend the group, what limitations there might be to this method of helping adoptive parents, et cetera.

We were clear that group meetings might supplement but would certainly not replace individual case-work with families, whether intended as a preparation for supervision or as a means of supervision. We recognized that what we have been doing about preparing families for taking a child and for supervision has tended to be general and vague. Without neglecting to give individual help to the families who find the

period preceding placement a time of considerable anxiety, we thought that direct preparation might be given advantageously in a group meeting where a family also might be better able to accept the fact that there are problems in adoption for *all* families. We were much interested in the use which has been made in one of the agencies of group meetings prior to intake interviews for purposes of orientation, in which couples are apt to come in rather tense and apprehensive, but show a marked relaxation and reassurance as a result of the meeting.

As we thought about group meetings as possibly to be incorporated into supervision, we recognized the need for careful selection of families for whom this method might be used, especially as some families would be definitely uncomfortable in a group situation. Generally, however, it was felt that in some respects families may talk more freely in a group so that in such a setting problems could be expressed which might remain hidden in the interview situation. Whether group meetings would actually be a time saver to the agency was doubtful, we concluded, since it might be fairly important for the families' workers to be on hand also to pick up clues revealing the need for more individual help. We deliberated a little over the presence of the family's own caseworker in the group as an inhibiting influence or not, and also over who should conduct the meetings. We were not sure caseworkers would have enough knowledge of group work techniques to do this. Perhaps the families would be freer and achieve a more complete identification with the agency if the leader were a staff member other than their own worker. It seemed to us that six or eight couples would be an appropriate size for such a group and that selection might be somewhat on the basis of the age of their adopted children.

We noted that there would be a good deal of variation in group meetings according to their purpose and timing, and there were various suggestions about timing, namely: after the first supervisory visit, in the middle of the supervisory period; following the last visit but before actual legal adoption; or after legal adoption.

We realized that it was necessary to take into account the intensely exciting and stirring experience that a group meeting may mean to families if deeply sensitive problems happen to be touched on, and that we would need to be cautious in setting up any group meeting as to subject matter so that we do not plunge families into a terrific emotional experience with anxiety for which they could not get the kind of attention they needed in a group setting.

We concluded that group meetings might have helpful potentialities, if we could learn how to use

them, and thought their usefulness might be developed through experimentation and sharing of experience on the part of the various agencies.

Before closing our series of meetings, we took account of some aspects of supervision which had not been discussed and which would bear further consideration. These included the question as to whether and, if so, how we can give adoptive parents anticipatory help for later problems; what use, if any, we make of our adoptive parents during the supervisory period, or later, to give us more awareness of how we could be of greater help to them and how our present procedures really seem to them; if and how supervision of a second child placed is different from supervision of the first child; and, as our subcommittee noted, the actual methodology of helping parents to handle the interpretation of adoption with their children.

We could not close this report without a sincere expression on the part of the members of the group of the value we have felt in participating in it. This has been for us all a stimulating experience and one which has helped us in clarifying our own thinking. Over and above this has been the enrichment to each of us of a more tangible acquaintance with agencies other than our own, and of an increased awareness that we are all working side by side, striving to move ahead and to make increasingly effective and responsible the services we render in the field of adoption.

(Editor's Note: The League would welcome further discussion of the ideas in this article and any reports on agency experience in this area.)

Some Books Received in 1952

Essentials in Interviewing. Anne F. Fenlason. Harper & Bros., N. Y. 352 pp. \$4.00.

A handbook for the interviewer offering professional services and text for students in social work.

Childhood and Society. Erik H. Erikson. W. W. Norton & Co., N. Y. 397 pp. \$4.75.

A study dealing with the relationships between childhood training and cultural accomplishment, between childhood fears and social anxiety.

Social Workers in 1950. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. American Association of Social Workers, N. Y. 78 pp. \$1.00.

A report on the study of salaries and working conditions in social work, Spring 1950.

The Adolescent and His World. Dr. Irene M. Josselyn. Family Service Association of America, N. Y. 124 pp. \$1.75.

A study of adolescence as a stage of emotional growth designed primarily for professional persons working with young people.

Controls From Within. Fritz Redl and David Wine- man. The Free Press, Chicago. 332 pp. \$4.50.

This book gives a detailed account of the program of Pioneer House, Detroit, which provides treatment for children with problems of emotional disturbance.

Our Children Today. Edited by Sidonie M. Gruenberg and the staff of the Child Study Association of America. Viking Press, N. Y. 366 pp. \$3.95.

A symposium by 26 authorities presented as a guide to the needs of children from infancy through adolescence.

Child Adoption in the Modern World. Margaret Kornitzer. Philosophical Library, N. Y. 403 pp. \$4.50.

Information on adoption laws and practices in various countries.

Infant and Maternal Care in New York City. E. H. L. Corwin, General Director. Columbia University Press, N. Y. 188 pp. \$3.50.

A study of hospital facilities sponsored by the Committee on Public Health Relations, the New York Academy of Medicine.

Psychological Studies of Human Development. Edit. Raymond G. Kuhlen and George G. Thompson. Appleton-Century-Crofts, N. Y. 533 pp. \$3.50.

A series of 71 papers on the psychological aspects of human growth and development.

The Wonderful Story of How You Were Born. Sidonie M. Gruenberg. Hanover House, Garden City, N. Y. 39 pp. \$2.00.

A book designed to answer the questions both of preschool and older children. Illustrated in color.

Behavior Difficulties of Children. Dr. William Griffiths. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. 116 pp. \$3.00.

Institute of Child Welfare Monograph No. 25. A study seeking to find out what kinds of behavior problems children think they have, compared with those reported by their parents and teachers.

New Play Experiences for Children. Ruth E. Hartley, Lawrence K. Frank and Robert M. Goldenson. Columbia University Press. 66 pp. \$.75.

A pamphlet presenting the findings of that aspect of an exploratory study of play sponsored by the

Caroline Zachry Institute which concerned itself with planned play groups, miniature life toys and puppets.

Growing Through Play. Ruth E. Hartley. Columbia University Press, N. Y. 62 pp. \$.75.

"Experiences of Teddy and Bud", a pamphlet arising from the above-mentioned study of play and illustrating that a true understanding of children's play can be achieved only when the child's use of each medium is interpreted in relation to the framework of his own living problems.

Women Workers and Their Dependents. U.S. Women's Bureau. U.S. Government Printing Office. 117 pp. \$.30.

A pamphlet studying some of the economic and social responsibilities of women who work.

Personality in the Making. Helen Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky. Harper & Bros., N. Y. 454 pp. \$4.50.

The Fact Finding Report of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.

best there is only a difference of degree between statistics and lies, and therefore statistics have but limited value for social work. However, few representatives of this line of reasoning feel very comfortable; they are generally rather self-conscious about their reactions.

That becomes particularly clear when the discussion turns to education and training for social work. While the tone of the underlying feeling perhaps will show a similar negative quality, the argument at least outwardly, on the theoretical level, will lead to a recognition of the place of statistics in the make-up of the future social worker. Treatment of statistical methods ought to be included in the preparation of the practitioner. Social workers should, theoretically, be able to use statistics and to participate in their preparation. This is particularly true of social workers in the children's field where precise information is frequently lacking.

There can be hardly any doubt that all this is evidence of a conflict within the minds of many social workers who harbor a real distaste for statistics, but who realize at the same time that at the roots of this distaste are not primarily "statistics" per se, but rather the experience which they have had with them. In large measure, the generally negative reaction towards statistics seems to be caused by fear arising out of misunderstanding of the nature of statistics. Concern is expressed that statistics will reduce the essence of all social work, the work with the individual, to cold, meaningless generalities, to an unrealistic and empty "average"; that people—children, parents, the troubled adolescent, or the lonely, unattached migrant, will be lost behind a mass of impersonal data to obscure uniqueness; and that statistical treatment of such intangibles as social work data represent will result in misleading formulations. And far back in many social workers' minds lurks the apprehension that the use of statistics requires a special brand of figuring and cold reasoning which is incompatible with the "social work approach".

All this might sound like an unfounded, exaggerated caricature which misses present-day thinking by a wide mark. While the composite of all these attitudes admittedly is not very realistic, many of us will discover familiar lines of thought in most of them. But fortunately this does not represent the complete picture. Although there has never been much difference of opinion—at least in more recent times—about the scientific nature of social work, there is now a growing awareness of the fact that the trend of all sciences is toward a greater quantification of concepts with the help of statistical tools. Familiarity with statistical methods becomes thus a necessary part of the equipment of all professional person-

BOOK NOTES

STATISTICAL METHODS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS, by Wayne McMillen. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1952. 428 pp. \$6.75.

The publication of Wayne McMillen's *Statistical Methods for Social Workers* must be welcomed as an important contribution to professional social work literature. It is a treatment of statistics for the use of social work students and practitioners by a member of the Faculty of the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago. No longer will it be necessary to adapt books on "social statistics" to our own needs, since we have now a text designed exclusively for home consumption. It is a book that, it is hoped, will help to change a situation which has become quite critical and which might well have led, if not arrested effectively, to an unfavorable development in the profession.

When contemporary discussions in social work circles turn to statistics, we can expect an almost predictable reaction pattern. A majority will express rather definitely negative feelings, often quite violently, without giving sound reasons for their antagonism. Others, not much less negative, will assume a self-deprecating attitude: "Statistics are too complicated for me." Still others will reject statistics and their use by dragging out the hoary argument that at

nel. As social workers we will have to be able to participate in these developments and to keep abreast of them.

There is also, and perhaps more immediately, the recognition that social work is an organized activity of considerable magnitude, involving large groups of people and great amounts of money. In the management of social welfare organizations utilization of statistics is inevitable. For purposes of administration and planning the use of quantitative data is essential. Interpretation and fund-raising are dependent on our ability to convey our objectives and our work in ways which are accepted and understood by a public which is used to, and expects, factual presentations.

But, to come back to our earlier point, why, then, still this ambiguity towards statistics in social work? What can be done to clear up some of these misunderstandings concerning the nature of statistics and the use to which they can be put in social work; misunderstandings which frequently can be traced back to the fact that too often we had to use teaching materials—whether in formal schooling or in self-education—which were written for a different audience, primarily educators and psychologists whose interests, methods, and problems were not ours, though related to ours in many respects. These textbooks failed to show us what statistics can mean to social workers, how we can use them, how they can help us in our practice, with our problems.

While social work had successfully adapted many concepts from other fields for its own use, we lagged behind in the development of our own materials in statistics. We borrowed, rather than "integrated", from psychology, education, and economics, and often lost sight of the differences in the problems, and also of the still limited scope of scientific data in social work, becoming involved in statistical concepts which, for the practitioner, were confusing since their applicability was highly impractical.

Professor McMillen's book represents our most significant attempt so far to remedy this situation. It gives recognition to the fact that for practice in the field of social welfare *descriptive*, rather than inductive, statistics are essential, and that practitioners in this field need to be familiar with them. The tone is set by the jacket design, showing a group of people of all kinds and ages, our clients, on their way through a big pencil, representing the statistical tools, and emerging still recognizable individuals. On every page we meet situations taken from our day-to-day practice, from the opening remarks which deal historically with the development of statistics in the field of social welfare, to the examples in the Appendix which are without exception related to our field and to our interests.

It seems doubtful that in the future anyone will be able to say: "Statistics are too complicated for me". The clarity and simplicity of the presentation make this excuse inadmissible once and for all. The emphasis which Dr. McMillen places on the need for clear, definite, and logically ordered statistical reports is exemplified throughout the entire book. He proceeds on the assumption that in a textbook of this kind nothing should be taken for granted beyond an elementary knowledge of simple arithmetic and, in contrast to many other books which are written under a similar premise, his intent is carried through till the very end. He succeeds in describing the necessary operations and formulations in terms which take the reader step by step through the statistical process, explaining the origin of formulae and clarifying concepts, so that the statistics take on meaning. A particularly telling example is the treatment of logarithms in the tenth chapter.

Nothing, however, has been included which does not meet the criterion of usefulness for practice. Methods which have not proved to be of substantial value in the statistical work of social welfare agencies are not discussed, as, for instance, the methods for approximating the mode from a frequency table (p. 242). On other occasions, pertinent techniques are briefly described, but reference is made to more pragmatic approaches which might be more advisable for child welfare agencies, as in the instance of population estimates.

This considered limitation of scope is further evidenced by a comparison of the table of contents with that of other standard texts ordinarily used by schools of social work. One third of the 428 pages which deal with the subject matter is given over to general introductory material, geared to workers' and agencies' practice, describing collection and tabulation of data, and their presentation in tabular and graphic form. Illustrated by numerous examples from the files of welfare agencies, the framework is constructed within which statistical methods can be applied.

Chapters six to twelve, the major part of the text, deal with these methods. Here the intent to limit the discussion to the field of descriptive statistics results in a most welcome selectivity. Ratios, frequency distributions, averages, measures of variability, sampling, time series, population estimates, and correlation and contingency are discussed in full and amply illustrated. No attempt is made to present methods and techniques which have become standard equipment in statistics for educators and psychologists, but which are of doubtful value to the social work practitioner—as differentiated from the social work research specialist—whose data are not usually suffi-

ciently refined to allow for the application of these techniques. The concluding chapter discusses the presentation of statistical data in reports and studies.

A feature which will be particularly useful for the study of statistical methods, either in the classroom or office, is the extensive Appendix which in 120 pages contains not only standard tables needed for the computation of statistical measures, but also a wide variety of examples taken from material in the field of social welfare, to be used for exercises during the course of study. From wage statistics to fuel expenditures, from the number of rehabilitated persons to the ages at date of arrest of federal offenders: familiar data are here collected to make the study of statistics a learning experience within our own field.

It is inevitable in a book of this scope that minor differences of opinion will arise. It is to be expected that not everybody will agree with every statement, that some might wish certain points included, or others treated less fully. This reviewer, for instance, would have liked greater emphasis placed on pictorial presentation, which is more and more coming into use by social agencies in their reports and in their interpretive material. A more detailed discussion of the problems of units in the field of social welfare as the basis for service accounting would also have been helpful. Some of the material in chapters two and twelve, dealing with methods of research in general, might stand some amplification; while admittedly outside the immediate scope of the book, a direct reference to one of the standard texts on research methods might have been added to indicate the fragmentary nature of the material presented in these sections. Index numbers in the field of social welfare, while certainly not much developed, have been used more recently in some interesting attempts which might have been referred to by way of illustrations. While the subject of sampling has correctly been considered outside the scope of the book, some introductory remarks regarding the nature of the sample might have clarified the brief remarks devoted to the subject.

All this, however, is of minor importance and can in no way detract from the significance of this pioneering effort. The very subjectivity of these critical comments suggests the fundamental soundness and quality of the work. Student and practitioner alike will find the study of *Statistical Methods for Social Workers* an experience in social work training which is not only stimulating but rewarding because it will help towards greater efficiency and competence in their practice.

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SCHOOLS FOR THE VERY YOUNG, by Heinrich H. Waechter, A.I.A., and Elisabeth Waechter. The Architectural Record, New York. 1951. 197 pp. \$6.50.

This book will prove an invaluable resource to any group responsible for planning a new building or remodeling an old one for use as a nursery school, day nursery or day care center especially when the stage of serious planning is reached.

Written by a husband and wife team, an architect and a nursery school teacher, it gives us a new sense of integration. The modern architect must understand the educational purpose and details of daily use of the projected plant and equipment in order to plan adequately. On this philosophy, educators, social planners and architects meet. Each of us asks the same questions. First, what are the needs with which we are concerned and then, how do we go about meeting them?

Mr. and Mrs. Waechter discuss briefly the history and practice of preschool education (their term covers nursery schools and kindergarten groups). They describe vividly what goes on in a preschool group—what children do and the relationship of this to the school's educational philosophy. This section would be an educational one for many members of boards or community committees responsible for day care services. Differences in educational practices may be explored as they are expressed architecturally in the profuse illustrations from many different countries.

The members of a building committee using this book as a guide for consultation with their architect would find themselves defining the goal of their services more clearly, understanding the reasons for standards of space and equipment. Most of all, they would be thinking more creatively and flexibly about the importance to children, staff and community of the *place* in which they spend many hours a day.

There are chapters on technical details especially for the architect, but written simply so the building committee can also understand its responsibility and the questions to which it needs answers. The suggestions for equipment are excellent, and here again, the illustrations are a most valuable part of the book.

Just one section, that on standards for size of groups, offered cause for real concern. The resources from which the figures were drawn are, in some cases, out-dated. They also seem to reflect predominantly the experience of half-day public schools and kindergartens. The number of children suggested for each of the younger groups is far too large by currently accepted standards. The importance for the "very young" of a sense of belonging and of group living, with not too many other children, with the same teachers in "homey" familiar surroundings day by day, is an essential part of nursery education philos-

ophy. Although this is not clear in the text, many of the floor plans pictured are actually based on this principle. It is an important concept for the building committee to keep in mind, since the building plan contributes so largely to the functioning of such a program.

While the illustrations cover a great variety of types of programs, the text on community programs does not include the developing concept of day care centers as focal points in community services to young children and parents. These centers are a very vital part of nursery education practice in this country, though they are not technically known as schools and therefore are not included in the Office of Educa-

tion listing of "Group Types" of preschools quoted by the authors.

This does not at all lessen the value of this book for day care agencies. The Waechters have made a great contribution towards improving housing for all preschool programs. By clearly defining principles of planning, they creatively urge us to go on from there. They have filled this book with very practical suggestions and the many illustrations are a tremendous asset.

WINIFRED ALLEN MOORE

*Day Care Consultant, United Community Defense Services—
Child Welfare League of America*

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DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES, CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISOR, FOSTER CARE CONSULTANT, DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES, CHILD WELFARE WORKERS, professional positions soon to be open. Beginning annual salaries \$4680-\$6180. Progressive personnel policies, including staff conferences, educational leave, 30 work days annual vacation, and annual salary increases. Alaska Merit System provides for transfer of comparable Civil Service status. Qualified applicants will be furnished full information upon request. Write via air mail stating qualifications to Alaska Department of Public Welfare, Box 2781, Juneau, Alaska.

CASEWORKERS, Catholic Social Service of San Francisco, multiple service agency, expanding program; professional staff of 52. Good supervision, psychiatric consultation, student training program. Salary \$2904-\$4392 according to training and experience; annual increments. SUPERVISORS, openings (1) in Children's Division, (1) in Adoption Unit. Requirements: two years' training and five years' experience. Salary \$3756-\$4872. Write Rt. Rev. Wm. J. Flanagan, 1825 Mission St., San Francisco 3, Cal.

CASEWORKER, for private, nonsectarian, statewide children's agency offering foster home, adoptive, day care and institutional placements. Salary range for trained person with experience, \$3000-\$4200. Children's Aid Society, 314 14th St., Denver, Colo.

CASEWORKER in institution for emotionally disturbed children. Master's Degree in casework required. Agency has multiple function child placing program. Salary in line with good personnel practices and experience. Children's Center, 1400 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn.

ADOPTION WORKER in multiple function children's agency. Salary in line with good personnel practices and experience. Master's Degree in casework required. Children's Center, 1400 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn.

CASEWORKER: Opening in family and children's agency. Professional training prerequisite. Salary range comparable with good agency practice. Information given upon inquiry. Write Director, Catholic Social Service Bureau, 478 Orange St., New Haven, Conn.

DIRECTOR, child guidance clinic, preferably psychiatric casework experience. Psychiatric consultation available to clinic. Community 50,000. Salary about \$4000. Address Bloomington Child Guidance Clinic, Bloomington, Ill.

CASEWORKER, to carry caseload of dependent and disturbed children in foster homes and institutions. Excellent supervision, psychiatric consultation, limited caseloads, good salaries and personnel practices. Write Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, 1122 N. Dearborn, Chicago 10, Ill.

CASEWORK SUPERVISOR, institution for adolescent girls. Suburban Chicago. Small caseload and supervision of two competent caseworkers. Consulting psychiatrist. Attractive apartment on campus. Write Mrs. M. L. Duckworth, Park Ridge School for Girls, 733 N. Prospect, Park Ridge, Ill.